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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01
IO-13 /070 W
----------111227Z 123904 /20
P R 111147Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 280
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 2373

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, PINT
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

1. MARCH 10 PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS TOOK PLACE IN WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN QUIET, SOMETIMES HOLIDAY ATMOSHPERE THROUGHOUT PAKISTAN. ALTHOUGH OPPOSITION PNA CALLED ON ITS SUPPORTERS TO BOYCOTT THE PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS BECAUSE THEY CLAIMED MARCH 7 NATIONAL ELECTION WAS RIGGED, ALLIANCE APPEARS TO HAVE MADE NO EFFORT TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM GETTING TO POLLS. GOP CLAIMS THERE WAS A VERY LARGE TURNOUT AT THE POLLS AND VOTING FOR PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES WAS ONLY 10 PERCENT LESS THAN VOTING DURING NATIONAL ELECTION. GOP ALSO CLAIMS LARGE NUMBER OF WOMEN VOTED. JUDGING FROM OUR OWN OBSERVATIONS, THOSE OF CONGENS, AND PRESS REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN, WE DOUBT
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TURNOUT WAS AS HEAVY AS GOP MAINTAINS. (WE DO NOT DENY POSSIBILITY THAT ANNOUNCED VOTING STATISTICS WILL "PROVE" GOVERNMENT'S CONTENTION.)

2. WITH PNA BOYCOTTING THE VOTE, PPP NATURALLY WON LANDSLIDE VICTORIES IN ALL FOUR PROVINCIAL CONTESTS. ACCORDING TO LATE EVENING MARCH 10 UNOFFICIAL RESULTS COVERING ROUGHLY HALF

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OF THE SEATS, PPP HAD BAGGED 232 TO EIGHT FOR INDEPENDENTS. BULK OF REMAINDER WILL, OF COURSE, ALSO BE PPP. (LATEST WORD FROM KARACHI IS THAT PPP WON ALL 100 OF THE SIND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY SEATS.) ONLY SURPRISE IN PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS SO FAR HAS BEEN DEFEAT OF PPP BALUCHISTAN INFORMATION MINISTER MIAN SAIFULLAH PARACHA IN HIS BID FOR REELECTION. IN ANOTHER BALUCHISTAN CONTEST, FORMER MINISTER AHMED NAWAZ BUGTI WON, ALSO AS AN INDEPENDENT.

3. POLICE, ARMY, AND SECURITY FORCES WERE OUT IN STRENGTH MARCH 10 TO GUARANTEE SECURITY OF POLLS. BECAUSE OF CALL FOR BOYCOTT AND BECAUSE MARCH 10 WAS NATIONAL HOLIDAY, MANY VOTERS APPARENTLY DECIDED SAFEST COURSE WAS TO STAY HOME. APP RELEASE CONCEDES THAT BECAUSE OF BOYCOTT AVERAGE VOTER TOOK PPP SUCCESS FOR GRANTED AND FELT LITTLE INCENTIVE TO VOTE. AS SOON AS POLLING ENDED SECTION 144 WENT BACK INTO FORCE THROUGHOUT PAKISTAN.
BYROADE

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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